MEETING THE PIOUS
4

Al-Waḥid al-Behbahāni
Man of Intellect

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Translator:
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point

This book is one of the series of books on biographies of those scholars having played a bright role in the world of thought and knowledge.

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Publisher's Foreword

In the Nameof Allah, theBeneficent,theMerciful

The Ansariyan Publications received many requests, through telephone contacts or readers' letters, all asking to publish books exposing biographies of those scholars having played a bright role in the world of thought and knowledge.

So this subject was put under attentive perusal of our Foundation, in response to the sincere desires curious for Islamic culture and ensigns.

While Ansariyan Foundation presents the series of Liqa' ma'a al-'Abrar (A Meeting with the Righteous), it hopes for attaining approval and pleasure of all dear readers, and all

.success is only from Allah

Ansariyan Publications

Preamble

Recording the conduct (sirah), morals and standpoints of the Awliya' (Allah's friends), is verily considered one of the educationally effective means, as the biography of prophets, Imams and the upright is replete with thousands of lessons and examples that lay down .for us the course of noble ethics

The prophets have truly incarnated the heavens teachings through their stances and conduct, laying down thus the way of the pure life expressing humanity aspirations. They .are vivid examples for all virtues and lofty attributes and morals

The Holy Qur'an has glorified the role of the prophets, calling all

p: ١

.mankind to follow their guide, and take lessons from their stances and acts

As Baqir al-'Ulum Research Foundation undertakes to publish this series of "A Meeting with the Righteous", it aims for shedding light upon the life of the 'ulama', with introducing .their biography and conduct to be glowing torches illuminating the way for generations

Baqir al-'Ulum

Research Foundation

Translator's Introduction

The Akhbari trend was destined to make of Karbala' its centre, after 'ilm al-'usul suffered a severe setback that was about to destroy it totally. The sensitive intellect ('aql) played a role that excited the Akhbaris, prompting them to adopt an extreme position against it. All circumstances remained to be on the side of the Akhbari trend, till the very Karbala' witnessed the emergence of a new school in fiqh and usul, under its great revivalist leader Muhammad Baqir al-Behbahani (d. ١٢٠٥ H.). Thereat a fierce struggle started between the two trends, that ended with the triumph of 'ilm al-'usul , and the defeat of .the Akhbari trend and its vanishment afterwards

Al-Behbahani's concerted efforts managed to lay down a separating boundary between .the two eras, of the history of scientific thought in fiqh and usul

This book may not be more than an attempt to review the documentary aspect in the life of one of great dignitaries in our modern history, and the door is still open for exploring the unknown dimensions of that giant personality. Nevertheless, the dear reader will :expressly witness three brilliant signs in his bright life

First: His peerless curiosity for

p: ٢

krnowledge-seeking, as knowledge used to be his permanent concern and only solicitude .wherever he be

.Second: His profound zuhd (asceticism) toward the world and its perishable means

Third: His glorification for the humane reason, the essence of Divine creation for choosing .the way, that leads man toward bliss in the two abodes - the world and Hereafter

Further, we should never neglect that spiritual transparency which may sublimate al-.Behbahani the great, high to an elevated luminous world

Hassan M. Najafi

Chapter ۱

City of Planets

Isfahan, which was one of the big legendary cities, seemed within seven years after al-'Allamah al-Majlisi's demise, declining toward the pit of degradation. It appeared as being deserted after the passing away of its great 'ulama', like Baha' al-Din al-'Amili, Mir Damad and al-Majlisi, while Sultan Husayn inclined toward the life of meekness and .entertainment, letting rulership affairs and politics to be handled by others

Muhammad al-'Akmal, who descends from al-Shaykh al- Mufid's lineage, was the last of those stars that set from the sky of the Wafawid capital, which started to vanish away. He was living in one of the city corners, being a scholar that people used to revere, acquiring .from his knowledge, and praying behind him

His Birth

The small house seemed that night so active... a group of women doing various works, one heating the water, another washing the dishes, and the other cooking the food, while an old woman was serving soft drinks. It was after midnight, and all those present there were sleeplessly awaiting (the birth). Also Muhammad al-'Akmal, as his

p: ۳

.usual habit, went to his small library, beseeching Allah

O Lord, shower Your mercy upon us, protect the mother and her child against every evil. My wife keeps the memory of great men like al-Mulla Walih al-Mazandarani and al-'Allamah al- Majlisi, O Allah I swear by their status and beg You to safeguard her against .every kind of harm, O my Lord

Suddenly, the old woman approached him, tighting her chadur,(۱) and so delightedly gave him the good tidings: It is a boy, O my master, may Allah bless him and make him of good .augur for you. He is like a blossoming flower, and so healthy

Thereat Muhammad al-'Akmal prostrated expressing his gratitude to the Almighty Allah .for His bounty, the child

He immediately responded to the old woman, taking out a money-purse, offering it to her .saying: May Allah reward you good, O Karbala'i(۲) Najmah

The old woman, while leaving the room, replied: May Allah make you long-lived, summon .me whenever necessary, and I will urgently be at your disposal

After some moments, his sister came carrying the child to its father, who embraced it, uttering the adhan and iqamah inside its ears, giving it the name of the Fifth Imam of Ahl .al-Bayt (A) - Muhammad al-Baqir

The Green Creed

A portion of night elapsed, with nothing to break. The night's deep silence except the barking of remote dogs. Thereat, Muhammad Baqir was, with his family, on the house roof, gazing at the glittering stars, concerned about tomorrow. Thinking about his new life has snatched sleep from

p: ۴

Chadur: is an abayah (oriental cloak) with which the woman in Iran covers her body. -۱ .((Translator

It is a name usually given to whoever visits the shrine of al-'Imam al-Husayn (A) at -۲ .(Karbala'. (Translator

:his eyes, while recalling his aunt's words resounding in the depth of his soul

O Muhammad Baqir! You have learnt a bit of the Qur'an, Arabs' manners, logic and the" ".Persian disciplines... from now on your father will undertake your education

Then he began to mumble with himself, recalling his kind aunt's face and her warm smile (saying): How poor is my aunt, she has become aged. In the meantime, drowsiness .overcame his eyes, overshadowing his face, whereat he surrendered to deep sleep

With the breaking of the dawn, Muhammad Baqir set forth to attend his father's class eagerly, whereat a new phase started in the boy's life... a stage replete with manners, wisdom, fiqh (jurisprudence), usul (principles), exegesis of the Qur'an and hadith .((tradition

There at a new door and wide horizons have opened before him that shaped his talents, where he began to acquire from those treasures, quaffing from those fountains, caring for nothing else. But fate (qadar) was of another opinion, as a horrible incident was lying .in wait for him

The Catastrophe

For the last time he returned, contemplating the wet soil, mumbling with himself: Is it reasonable that earth can conceal such a bright face, warm heart and pure eyes? Is it credible that all this can be covered under earth? Ah O earth, how dare you to hide the ?sea

.He uttered this and went into tears

In the meantime, his aunt called him. O Muhammad Baqir, aren't you coming with us? These sad words brought him to his consciousness, where he

:came to his senses, and, while drying his teardrops, he whispered

".Yes, I am coming… I am coming"

After saying this, he joined all the family members, who, after gathering their sorrows, .returned home

His father's demise meant a fatal blow for him, but this could not weaken his will at all, .remaining as he used to be sublime in the domain of thought

At one Autumn evening his mother said to him: O Muhammad Baqir, what is the matter with you my son? You go out in the morning and never return but in the evening. It seems .as you have turned away from knowledge-seeking

He replied, with touchy words, feeling as if they were coming out from the inmost of his heart (saying). Ah, my mother… I wish you could know how much I am looking here and there for a teacher competent to occupy my father's position. But how can this be attained while tumult and chaos are prevailing all the metropolis, and everything has .become so confused after being attacked by the Afghanis

Now its mosques are demolished, schools are destroyed, and all hopes and desires have ?vanished, so what to do

Shall he forsake knowledge-seeking, secluding himself a safe place? Shall he follow the example of other knowledge- seekers? But Muhammad Baqir was never thinking that .way at all

Autumn of the Aunt

At the last days of October, the aunt seemed at the end of her life… her face has shrunk into ridges, and she was inflicted with disease. So she came to her brother's

p: ۶

house, where Muhammad Baqir's mother offered her some sweet and pomegranate, saying I was so concerned about you... I know that you were so shocked with the .calamity

The aunt said: I wish I were dead as happened to my brother Muhammad. Sometimes I think that my brother was lucky, since he passed away from the world before .experiencing misfortunes, never witnessing all this devastation

The mother said: Don't worry, the destined hour for these people shall come and they will .perish. Have some sweets please

The aunt said: where is Muhammad Baqir? What have I done to make him depart me, ?that I never see him but once a month? Does he ever ask about his aunt

His mother said: What is that you utter? He owes you much favour... and only some days ...ago

At this moment she heard the sound of door opening with Muhammad Baqir's footsteps .breaking the silence of the place. "Salam 'Alaykum (peace be upon you)," said he

The aunt, with a smile, replied: "And peace be upon you.... I was about to forget you till I ".opened the door. You have become a man... a man who forgets his aunt

".He interrupted her saying: "O my aunt, we are living hard days

?"She said: Really? Where are you studying these days"

".Are there any more schools after the devastation caused by the Afghans"

What do you say? I heard that Mirza Yahya is teaching knowledge-seekers at this house" ".vault, and so is Mulla 'Ali, who is a mujtahid too

I am fed up with"

p: ٧

".this town O aunt

He added, while taking a piece of sweets, after sitting beside his aunt: I am thinking of .departing this land

".Where to? Qum or Kashan? The sky has the same colour wherever you go"

Well, I will go to a cloudless sky, whose sun never sets." "The aunt laughingly said: The" ?"city of poets

He replied: "No my aunt, I mean the holy city of Najaf... the city of 'Ali or I may go to ".'Karbala

I should travel there. Before some days, I saw in dream the Messenger of Allah (S), being" annoyed by a group of his people. So I rushed to separate them from him, then I saluted him. He was holding a half-cubit scroll, which he handed to me. I took it running to the ".(shrine of al-'Imam al-Husayn (A

?"His mother, without hiding her concern, said: "So you are determined to travel

Yes mother, I have talked to Karbala'i Nasr Allah al- Qatarchi, and he apprised me that" ".the caravan will set out to Karbala' next Saturday

:His aunt was listening with a smiling face, then she said

You can go... I foretell that a hopeful future is before you. But as you reach there, do not " ".forget to pray for your aunt at the holy shrine

Would You Delay Your Travel

The big caravansary (Khan) was near to the bridge of Si wa seh pul.(١) The place was so busy with the travellers' movements and grumbling, with Muhammad being engaged in .conversation with his mother in one of the caravansary corners

His mother said to

It is a monumental big bridge at Isfahan (Iran), consisting of thirty-three pillars. - ١
.((Translator

.him: "Would that you stay some other days!" "What for, mother?" He asked

Karbala'i Ghulam Husayn told me that your brother Muhammad Husayn will come back" from Kazerun(١) next week, may you postpone your trip for another week, so that you .can meet your brother," she said

I found travel-mates and it is improper to delay any more, mother. Give him my regards" ".and apology

At that moment his brother Hasan Ridha appeared, taking his little son's hand. He :approached them and saluted. Then the mother angrily said

Have you forgotten that your father is dead, your brother is at Kazerun, and your mother" has turned to be a lonely woman, and that Muhammad Baqir may be needing you, as the .elder brother being in the position of the father

?"He asked: "What happened mother

".What is that you like to happen further? The caravan is about to set out"

O mother, I was busy.... Muhammad Ibrahim is sick, so I was looking for a doctor and" ".medicine for him

His eldest sister, being out of breath, said: "Yesterday he was intending to talk to his ".brother, hoping to persuade him to give up the idea of travelling

His mother said): "What do you say? Muhammad Baqir is not a lad. He knows well that life) ".is so hard, and it is infeasible for anyone to send him the money he needs

Muhammad Baqir was silently listening to the conversation, but said then: "Are you ?"worried about me mother, regarding this aspect

The mother said: "If you linger awhile, your brother

p: ٩

١- It is a small town at the west of Shiraz.

Muhammad Husayn may do something. He may furnish you with a sum of money, or ".recommend any of the merchants to aid you in case of need

The mother was muttering these words, while drying her tears with the skirts of the chadur. Handing Muhammad Baqir a bag, she added: "Since the demise of your father, ".our situation is not all right... excuse me my son

Don't be concerned about me mother. Allah is present everywhere, and He never" ".neglects His bondmen

Ridha Hasan smiled and said: "It is no good to cry at the time of travel. O mother, laugh and delight the heart of your son. By the way, have you given him the address of al-?"Sayyid Muhammad

It was not an exact address. He lives in one of the houses sorrounding the sanctuary," ".and further, he is widely known there

Come on! All should get on, the caravan is about to set out. The voice of Karbala'i Nasr" ".Allah al-Qatarchi spread all over the carvansary, while calling the passengers to get on

.Thus, the young knowledge-seeker bade his family farewell for the last time, and got on

Mashhadi Murad's Precepts

The travellers got down at a caravansary on the caravans road for rest. Muhammad Baqir sat down with five of his fellows at a caravansary corner, having their supper .around fire

Mashhadi 'Abbas Quli was a merchant wearing a gray dress, with a black hood on his head. Swallowing the morsel, he said: "Are you really the son of Muhammad al-'Akmal, who died two years ago?!" "Yes, I

p: ١٠

".am

May Allah's mercy be upon him… for a long time I used to pray behind him. Why don't you" eat something, son?" The aged man never moved, and while gnawing a hen's leg, said: ".“Eat, my son. O Mirza Qasim, hand me the jar, please

Then he said: "There are some principles to be followed during travel; first he has to eat ".nourishing food, to be able to endure the hardships of the road

After having some water, he praised Allah, and as he intended to continue his speech, he was interrupted by a man called Qasim, who said: Isn't there other than Mashhadi Murad ?to cite these sage precepts

:Zulf'ali, who has just finished having his supper, laughed and said

Yes, and if you like to sleep in quietness you should take off your shoes. Third: When you" intend to put on your shoes, you should check it carefully that there might be a thorn inside them that harms you. Fourth: If…." Qasim roared with laughter and resumed his speech saying: Fourth, if you pass by a bathroom, you should not take a bath before …taking off your clothes, then

Mushhadi Murada's wrinkled face was illuminated with a big smile, as he said: "Let me complete my discourse…. I was to say: Second: which is more important, if your travel happened to be with ignorant people like Zulf'ali or Mirza Ridha Quli, turn away from ".them, endure and forbear as I did

All attendants burst into laughter, whereat Zulf'ali said: "Now it is time

p: ١١

".to sleep, it is better to sleep early, and Karbala'i usually travels early

Ridha Quli broke his silence and said: "Is this the time fit for sleep? Can we actually sleep ".now?" "Let's rest upon pillows and talk, and may Qasim chant some poetry till we sleep

The travellers pillowed their heads, as Mashhadi laughingly said: "O company, be cautious, al-Hajj Muhsin, on returning from pilgrimage to the sacred shrines last year told ".me that this caravansary was assailed by hornless and tailless ghosts

?"Abbas Quli worriedly said: "What do you mean'

Nothing… at midnight, for instance, we might be attacked by Afghani soldiers, who are in" fact responsible for prevalence of security here. After coordinating with the governor, ".they may embark on looting everything from the travellers, even their clothes

".Can this be reasonable? Highwaymen usually lie concealed in the lanes"

?"Zulf'ali said: "They are not highwaymen." "Who are they then

It is obvious… highwaymen assail caravans on the roads not caravansaries, but these" "!people are caravansaries burglars… ha ha

Mashhadi Murad angrily said: "I am warning you, whereas you are only mocking and ?"hallucinating

:Muhammad Baqir, who used to be silent, said

?"This caravansary is not secure against thieves' assailment then"

Zulf'ali disapprovingly said: "What are you after, O Mashhadi Murad? Do you intend to ?"snatch sleep from the youth's eyes, making him stay up all night

".I just wanted to warn you, and excused is that who warned"

Ridha Quli said: "O company, go to bed… nothing of the sort will take place. The Afghans ,were hungry at that time

p: ١٢

but they have become satisfied now. O Qasim, chant... so Qasim commenced intoning ".with Hafiz(۱)'s poems about night, love and loyalty

Chapter ۲

point

Everything in existence is a trace for your steps

This sun too is a part of your prevalent shade

".All friends have separated so I came seeking your shelter

Hope

As the caravan was approaching the City of Najaf, and after the appearance of the dome and minarets at sight, the blessings (upon Muhammad and his Household) were raised .loudly by the travellers

Karbala'i Nasr Allah al-Qatarchi emerged, being covered with dust from top of head to :the foot sole, and merrily cried

Send blessings on Muhammad... send blessings loudly. Then blessings were raised loudly" spreading everywhere, as if a new life has emanated inside the hearts of the travellers ".while rushing toward the shrine of the everlasting champion of Islam - 'Ali ibn Abi Talib

Thereat Karbala'i Nasr Allah - who took the leadership of tens of caravans before - :started, as usual, chanting a ballad in praise of 'Ali

Send blessings upon the charm of the assembly intercessor, the Kawthar water-bearer" ".the intrepid lion

After few steps cut by the caravan, the city ruins and traces of towers could be clearly .sighted

A murmur and mumbling prevailed among the travellers while being engaged in supplication and thankfulness. Muhammad Baqir felt as if his soul was hovering round about space of light, while looking at the everlasting dome... and unwillingly teardrops

.flowed out from his eyes like rainy clouds

.He was in fact approaching the wilayah (guardianship) tree

p: ۱۳

.Al-Hafi z al-Shirazi is a well-known Iranian poet -۱

He started chanting a green du’a’ (invocation), whispering with himself: I wish I came here earlier… I wish I came with my father, mother and aunt to live in this shady paradise. No one was aware of what was the young knowledge-seeker thinking of. His rushness to caressing the walls and gates of the holy shrine, revealed his profound love… pure love .whose roots grew and fountains spurted under ‘Ali’s patronage

So the young man has paid homage to ‘Ali (A), going here and there looking for a relative .or friend, settling down at last in a simple school

Don’t Cry, Mother

Muhammad Baqir spent the first night arranging his simple luggage at a corner of a small dark room; with swinging phantoms of dear faces appearing before his eyes… faces of his mother, father and aunt were striking his imagination. His aunt seemed to him with her white veil, smiling and saying: You have become a man, a man forgetting everything even .his old aunt

He saw his father with his bright face, trembling voice, recommending him. O son, I am about to depart this world, and I am recommending you with things never to be forgotten: .seeking knowledge, doing kindness to your mother, as she is the offspring of great men

But his mother’s image remains more tormenting for him than others… with her weeping voice as bidding him farewell. He murmured: She approved of my travel but departure was so difficult for her to bear… Do not cry mother, I won’t remain poor

p: ۱۴

.forever, verily I shall strive to bring you to Najaf

Thus Muhammad Baqir kept on communing with his mother's image, till drowsiness overcame him, making the dreaming youth mount the winged sleep-horse, .perambulating him through far-away worlds, infinite worlds

With the dawn-fall, the young man got up from bed, despite his feeling tired, but he rose .as if a call was inviting him to leave the warm bed

He soliloquized to himself: Leaving night prayer, and sleeping like the dead, are not of the traits of man, so what about one living beside the everlasting history man. Thus he rose up ridding his face of the dust of "substance", being so diaphanous, stepping forward .through Divine worlds

The only thing that tied him to the factual world, was the sound of adhan (call for prayer) .resounding loudly through the blue sky

He felt as if magnetic waves attracting him toward the shrine (haram), covering the entire city up to the farthest houses... attracting its people and attaching them to the holy shrine, at which they stay up till sunrise... the sun that never sets to include them with her warm .lights

Evening Hikmah School

The mosque was filled with knowledge-seekers, who have attended the class of (philosophy under al-Sayyid Muhammad al- Tabataba'i al-Brujerdi.(١

A ٣٥-year, thick-bearded, wide-eyed man has seated himself near the door, and :whispered in the ear of his companion

O Shaykh Mahdi! Look at that youth sitting near the rostrum... have you noticed how did" ?" he give reply to the teacher

Whom do you mean? Is it that"

p: ١٥

He was one of the great fuqaha' of his time, having his own opinion on the rational ١ - sciences. He has authored numerous books, the most known of which are: Sharh Mufatih al-fiqh; Risalah fi tahqiq al-'iman wa al-'Islam; Eayat al- Ma'sumin wa amakin dafnihim; Risalah fi hukm man yasum yawm 'Ashura' ; and Risalah fi asrar al-'ashkal al-khassah bi alif ba' al-huruf.

?"light-bearded young man wearing (Oriental) cloak

".No, I mean the one sitting at the left of the rostrum"

Do you mean that youth putting his head between the two covers of the book, as if" ?"intending to devour its papers

Yes, it is said that he has reached Najaf recently ... I was told by Mirza Husayn al-Kashi (۱)" ".that he is coming from your hometown. You are supposed to know him more than me

?"Is he from Isfahan"

Yes... he claims to be the son of Muhammad al-'Akmal and of having uterine kinship to" ".the teacher

If he really be the son of Muhammad al-'Akmal, it is self- evident then to be so; since" Muhammad al-'Akmal's wife belongs to the teacher's family, and both being the grandsons of al-Mulla Walih al-Mazandarani - the son-in-law of al- 'Allamah al-Majlisi. Or rather the teacher (ustadh) himself being the nephew of al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al- ".Majlisi, so he is the grandson of al-Majlisi the first

"!Surprising"

Al-Shaykh Mahdi seemed as intending to say something of importance, but the mosque :attendant's voice was raised announcing

".O gentlemen! The teacher is sick today"

A mumbling prevailed amongst the knowledge-seekers, who then embarked on .departing the mosque in ones and groups

?"Al-Shaykh Mahdi resumed his speech: "This guy then is affiliated to an inveterate family

Yes, on maternal side. And on paternal side he belongs to al-Shaykh al-Mufid. Now let's" go toward him, he may have some news about my family. As you know, I am so worried .since the Afghans' onslaught, not knowing what happened to them

p: ۱۶

١– Belonging to the town of Kashan.

“.This guy may deliver me of my anxieties

Then the two men sat after saluting Muhammad Baqir who was busy collecting his books .and note-books

Al-Shaykh Mahdi said to him: “Welcome… I heard that you have come recently from “.Isfahan.” “Yes, before about three months

“.Were you present during the tumult of the Afghans?” “Yes”

My family members are living behind the main mosque, I am worried about them, do you” ?“have any news about them

I was not present there, but some friends have informed me that all that locality” “.remained far from any aggression.” “I praise Allah, I feel at ease now

The Good Tidings

The Sun of Friday was gradually approaching the meridian… within two years after Muhammad Baqir’s coming to Najaf, and he is still cutting the distance between the haram (shrine) and the (theological) school, so quietly. The peddlers’ voices were raised loudly, while advertising for their simple goods, offered for sale on the pavements. The .caravansary, close to the shrine, was so crowded with awaiting travellers

As Muhammad Baqir was gazing at the caravansary, which seemed as old remains :amidst a town looking like ruins left behind from the old times, he whispered

The caravansary has become only ruins… the schools are improper… meat, wheat, barley” “.and vegetables are so expensive, and people usually eat dates, milk and bread

In the meantime, Sayyid Muhsin, who came to be acquainted with him during the :philosophy lesson, said to him

“.Peace be upon you, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir. I see you so plunged in thinking”

And peace be upon you, he”

".replied

?"!What is the matter? Have your ships sunk"

I was thinking of the shrine of al-'Imam 'Ali were in Iran, the city (Najaf) would have not" ".been in such a situation

Is there any trouble? We are all from one city, and the friend in need is the friend indeed" ?"- as it is said - so never be shy

No, nothing happened... I was contemplating about the city, about these ruins, the" caravansary, the schools, the cracking of the fence and towers, the drinking water. And an idea stroke my mind: had the shrine been in Iran, Najaf would have been like ".Mashhad

You are right, the kings of Iran, despite their being corrupt and deviated from religion, try" to fawn upon people through spending abundant money. The construction you witness ".here was only done by the king Tahmasb

".(Excuse me, I am in a hurry. My father is sick, and I am here to look for 'Awishan(١"

".Then he added with a smile:"Is there anything I can do for you?" "Thank you

".Farewell then, see you later." "May Allah protect you"

After only very few steps, he returned saying: "Have you ever heard of Sadr al-Din al- ".Hamadani(٢)?" "To some extent

He is one of Qum 'ulama'. He came to Qum from Najaf after the Afghans' onslaught, and" he is engaged now in teaching fiqh. It is said that he is very accurate in his lessons. He has ".learned under Fadhil al-Hindi, Jamal al-Din al-Khunsari and al- Shaykh Ja'far al-Qadhi

I remember I was told about him by my"

p: ١٨

It is a scented desert plant, with small leafs and short stalk, which is useful for - ١ .indigestion

He was an eminent muhaqqiq (investigator) at his era. He has authored al-Shuruh al- -٢ wafiyah, consisting of more than ١٥ thousand lines. About him al-Sayyid Ni'mat Allah al-Shushtari said: He is the best man I have ever seen in Iraq, and was usually visited by .Najaf people for seeking blessing and asking the solutions of judicial questions

".father

It is a good chance, or rather a good tidings for you, and be under Allah's protection" ".now

".In no hurry! I also have a good, fat and sweet news. You are invited to a dinner"

?"!Where, is it at al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir's house"

.No, it is at al-Sayyid Muhammad al-Tabataba'i's house"

?"Your lunch will be on next Tuesday, the thirteenth of Rajab." "What is the occasion

".A wedding ceremony"

".Whose wedding? And who is the bridgroom"

Go now and buy "Awishan.", lest the children's mother should be angry. I will tell you later" ".on

Al-Sayyid Muhsin interrupted him saying: "At last you became a bridegroom." "Well-done." .They both laughed and separated

The Festival Reactions

When the thirteenth of Rajab's sun began to rise at the horizon step by step, Sayyid Muhsin was crossing the streets and alleys to reach one of the alleys leading to the .shrine

Before reaching half the alley, he heard the voice of 'Ali al- Maddah, chanting with sweet :voice

,With his perfection he reached highness

,With his prettiness he uncovered darkness

,All his traits being excellent

.Upon him and his Household send blessings

Then blessings (salawat) were raised spreading over all the alleys, and from time to time a guest would enter to find someone guiding him toward his place inside the muddy room. Muhammad Baqir was sitting at the room corner, feeling so shy, keeping his head down .to the ground, while the syrup tray was distributed among the attendants

.While sipping the cup of sweet drink, Sayyid Muhsin whispered with low voice

Welcome... welcome, well-done O Muhammad Baqir, you have"

p: ١٩

".made affinity with a reputed family

.Then the table was spread, and those invited have had the food

A Traveller from Isfahan

The school was filled with the students' murmur, and Sayyid Sadr al-Din al-Hamadani .was sitting amongst a group of his disciples

Al-Sayyid Muhsin arrived and placed his hand on Muhammad Baqir's shoulder, whispering ".at his ear saying. "I have news of your interest

".Why so speedily? I have important questions to put to the teacher"

".Is there an end for your questions? Postpone them for tomorrow"

?"What happened"

".Nothing... my brother Mirza Kazim has just arrived from Isfahan"

"....Well, then"

".Let's go now, come with me"

:They both departed the mosque, whereat Muhammad Baqir smilingly said

?"Do you mean Mirza Kazim who fell captive at the hands of the highwaymen"

?"Yes, have I told you what happened to him"

You told me last year... and mentioned that the chief of the burglars has set him free," ".after finding the collection of his poems (diwan) and realizing his being a poet

I told you so to be safe from your tongue, informing you that poetry may be a means for" ".delivering some people from perdition

?"What happened now? Have the highwaymen ignored his poems this time"

What is that you utter? I have sad news for you and I know not the extent of your" ".forbearance

Of course I'll be patient, unless it be the news of your death – God forbid – as I cannot" ?"endure such a misfortune." "Leave jesting aside, I told you it is sad news." "What is it

".I am sure you will be grieved"

There is"

p: ٢٠

no news more bitter and harder than the demise of my father (may God's mercy by upon him).“

My brother brought me the news of the death of your aunt, may Allah's mercy be upon" her.“

“.May Allah's mercy be upon all of our dead ones.” “Let's go to the shrine"

Unknown Men

The sun was effusing its burning beams over Najaf shanties. Despite it was close of day (asil), the heat flame was suffocating, and Muhammad Baqir's house - like other houses - was about to melt due to flame. So the young knowledge- seeker has resorted, with his wife and little son, to the crypt.

As usual, the father was engaged in reading. The silence was broken by the sound of consequent knocking at the door. Muhammad Baqir rushed to see who the visitor was. He saw three unknown men, one being so advanced in years, with white hair, and so thin to the extent that his bones were protrusive in some places of his body. The men were wearing Iranian costumes. They said.

We are sorry for bothering you at this time. We are strangers looking for the address of" al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-'Isfahani.“

“.Come in, please"

“.We are coming from 'Qanawat' and 'Bebhahan', and in need of something"

“.Make yourselves home, please"

As they entered his house, Muhammad Baqir rushed and brought them sweet drinks. On taking their breaths, and resting for a while, the aged white-haired man said:

“.My name is Imam Quli"

Then he pointed at a mid-aged, frizzle-haired, tall-brown- faced man, saying: “And this man is

p: ۲۱

".Mirza Tahir

Then, introducing the third man who was bald, and seemed shorter due to having a ".paunch, he said. "And he is al-Hajj Qurban 'Ali

Muhammad Baqir welcomed them with a smile, saying. "Have you had your lunch?" "Yes, ".at the caravansary

?"What news you have about Behbahan"

".All praise is Allah's, everything is all right"

?"Was it attacked by the Afghans?" "Are they able to do so"

Al-Hajj Qurban 'Ali, who remained silent, interrupted them by saying. "People there are "...unselfish and sympathetic. The Afghans, led by Azam Khan, came toward us and

".Imam Quli corrected him by saying: "It is Azad Khan not Azam Khan

Yes, Azad Khan. They came, and halted behind the fences. They directed their cannons" ".towards us, while we had but one cannon

".Mirza Tahir said fervently: "I myself have fed the cannon

The defenders were of the opinion that al-Sayyid. 'Abd Allah al-Bahrayni starts to shoot" the first shell, for seeking blessing. Fortunately the shell fell near the camp of the commander Azad Khan, who was inflicted with some wounds, causing him to draw an evil ".omen from that, giving his orders to retreat

".By the way, how is Mulla Muhammad Ridha? I hope he be well, he is my father's cousin"

A dull silence prevailed over the little muddy room, and the three men have exchanged glances. They said: "For this purpose we are here... may Allah's mercy be upon him, and he remembered you as he was dying. We came to be at your service for this reason, people are awaiting your

".coming

Mirza Tahir said: "May God's mercy be upon him, he was an upright man. After him we ".have turned to be like sheep whose shepherd has left them

Imam Quli stood up, put on his cloak and said: "We shall return to the caravansary, our caravan will set out the day after tomorrow. I'll pass by you at the dawn of Wednesday, to ".know your opinion. Think about the matter please

?"What makes you be in great haste"

.We intend not to detract your attention of your lessons"

".'Concerning us, we may go to Karbala

The three men went out and closed the door, while Muhammad Baqir came back to see ?"his wife gazing him with patience, saying: "Who were your guests

?"Men coming from Iran, asking me to go to their town." "What was your reply"

".Are you worried?" "No, at all"

?"I have not made up my mind, yet... but..." "But what"

I made a mistake in not meeting their request. They have traversed long distances for" my sake, their town may be badly needing someone to guide them and teach them ".religion rulings. I must go... yes... I must

The Joining Trip

All the family members have gathered inside the house of al- Sayyid Muhammad al- :(Tabataba'i, who has let his grandson sit on his lap, starting to banter with him (saying

".Laugh, O Muhammad 'Ali, laugh for your grandfather"

The wife (of Muhammad Baqir) said to him: "Take the lad from his grandfather, to let him ".rest for a while

".Let him be on his grandfather's lap... look how he laughs"

The grandfather continues

p: ۲۳

bantering with his grandson. “O Muhammad ‘Ali! Do you intend to leave your grandfather ?“alone and go away

?“Turning his face toward his son-in-law, saying: “Have you meditated well

“.I am here to consult you in this regard”

It seems that the town people badly need someone to guide and teach them the” principles of their religion. The Akhbaris - as you know - are so influential there, and .people are in need for sound and proper thought. So I am duty-bound to go there

Since you believe this to be your duty, it is needless to consult, you can go and depend” “.upon Allah

As Muhammad Baqir’s wife was preparing the supper table, she said: “Does he go? Shall “!!we depart you so easy

When duty necessitates, there should be no delay. Can you be answerable on his behalf” ?“on the Day of Reckoning

Then we must have our dinner, and be ready for travelling and enduring the bitterness of” “.separation

O Imam Quli! Farewell

The sound of bells and travellers’ voices were prevailing all over the caravansary. Mirza Tahir and al-Hajj Qurban ‘Ali were sitting, waiting for the return of Imam Quli, who were .to al- Sayyid’s house

As his eyes were stuck at the caravansary gate, Mirza Tahir said: “To travel with this old man causes headache. Two hours have passed, and still he has not come back; the ?“caravan may set out. What to do then

Thereat, al-Hajj Qurban ‘Ali stopped his hymn (tasbih), disapproving that by saying: “O Mirza, he is one of Allah’s friends... don’t be worried, he

".will verily arrive in due time

After few moments, Imam Quli appeared, saying: "Salam 'Alaykum (peace be upon you)." ".“And peace be upon you, why are you late?” “But, as you see, I've reached in due time

".What news you have, is al-Sayyid coming or not?" "Yes, he is coming, next month"

".Qurban 'Ali moved his woolen hood, mumbling: "Then we have to return to Najaf again

It is better that one of us informs town people of this news, and the other two remain to" ".accompany al-Sayyid in his trip

?"Mirza Tahir, being perplexed, said: "I don't know what to do; shall we stay or leave

".Imam Quli, angrily, said: "You are always in a haste... you can go and we shall stay here

".Mirza Tahir became displeased, saying: "I am not a halfway comrade

Qurban 'Ali said: "It is not as you believe, one of us should go to the town and apprise its ".people of al-Sayyid's coming. O Imam Quli, you can go... the caravan is about to move

Imam Quli, mounting his came, said: "Farewell, is there any recommendation?" "Only ".peace... May Allah protect you

Chapter ۳

point

Mashhadi Rajab returned from his field, holding his shovel that seemed as his rival in :height. As he was cutting the miry land, he addressed his neighbour Ghulam Husayn

Mustafa Khan's canal will be digged toward our land tonight, it is inevitable to return at" ".night for inspecting the water

".I don't think so, they will dig it on the lower lands"

Look at that multitude of people... I think someone is"

?“dead

Hold your tongue, man… why do you croak like a crow. He is Imam Quli. He drew nigh and” ?“said: “What are you doing here? Are you from another world?” “What happened

Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-’Isfahani, the cousin of the late Muhammad Ridha, is” “.arriving today

“.Is he coming from Isfahan?” “No, from Najaf”

“!Najaf”

Yes, I was informed so by Mirza Tahir. Both Karbala’i Taqi and al-Hajj ‘Ali Jum’ah have ” “.gone for his reception, they may enter our village at any moment

Looking far-away, he added: “Look, Qurban ‘Ali has arrived. Send blessing upon the “.Prophet

You said that al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-’Isfahani is to arrive, then you say: Qurban” “!‘Ali has arrived! Send blessings upon the Prophet

Don’t you know that Qurban ‘Ali was in Najaf to accompany al-Sayyid while coming” “.here? O Mirza Kazim, chant for us, please

Then Mirza Kazim started chanting and hymning with the blessings upon the Prophet and his Household. The space of the expansive fields was filled then with sweet heavenly .melodies, adding to the splendidness of the village nice sunset

A Night at the Mosque

:Karbala’i Yahya said

O our master! Our village is divided into two parts separated by a line; the first part is” “.“called “Qanawat,” and the second is “Behbahan

?“You mean, there is a line separating them”

Karbala’i Yahya, who was a short thin man, playing with his imbued beard, said: “No, Sir, “.there is a long alley separating them, that was named as line

Mirza Tahir interferred interruptingly: “The late Mulla Muhammad Ridha has done his best to reconcile between the two parties, but

p: ۲۶

was not respited by death (may Allah's mercy be upon him). On one of Ramadhan's evenings we sat till midnight, but… without reaching any conclusion, the Behbahan ".magnates stood up and departed the mosque

Mashhadi Murad, while fixing his hood, said: "O Sir, the dispute is in origin about Mustafa Khan Canal… water is the basis of the trouble. If this problem was solved, no conflict ".would be there and concord would prevail

Thereat Karbala'i regrettably said: "There is no sense in this dispute at all. We all belong to the same village, we are all Muslims and we and them are neighbours too. If the Sayyid permits us to invite both the parties to be present at Khayrabad School for a lunch ".banquet, and then we can decide what to do

:Muhammad Baqir, listening with regret, said

Allah – the Exalted – said: "And hold fast, all of you together to the cable of Allah, and do" not separate." (۳:۱۰۳). And in another place of His Holy Book, He said: "The believers are .(naught else than brothers." (۴۹:۱۰

Aren't these Allah's words? Hasn't Allah commanded us toward fraternity and evading dispute? I hope that harmony be prevailing and felicity be established, so that the Owner ".of Time (Sahib al-Zaman) be pleased with us, and Allah blesses us

Imam Quli, addressing al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, said: "Some say that we should refer directly to the Imams' traditions (ahadith), applying all their precepts with no need to refer to a marji' taqlid (religious authority). That is, we

p: ۲۷

".have to imitate the Imams themselves with no need for any other person

Muhammad Baqir was aware of the fact that the schools of the Akhbaris had its influence :through these regions, so he said calmly

They are mistaken, how can we be sure of the veracity of these news, and that this was" truly said by the Imams. As there are ahadith falsily ascribed to them, whose chain of .transmission is weak, and some are contradictory to the Qur'an

Who can differentiate between the scum from the good? Then there should be someone to undertake the task of investigating the narrations to recognize the weak and the .authentic ones

".This is the truth"

Al-Hajj Qurban 'Ali vainly said: "I remember I have said to one of them: If it be as you say, so it is not necessary to spend twenty or thirty years in learning and investigation at Najaf. As whoever is able to read and write can attain the position of giving fatwa !(verdict), after reading some books containing the Imams' traditions and biographies

"!May Allah's mercy be upon Mulla Muhammad Ridha; his words were exactly like yours ...

Behbahan

Al-Hajj Ghulam Ridha, who sat beside the Sayyid, whispered: "Our master! According to ".your orders, I have invited all the men of Qanawat for having lunch

".I seek God's forgiveness"

I hope that all events be kept to their course, and concord prevails again... your coming is" ".a blessing and grace for Behbahan

Al-Hajj, addressing the banquet organizers, added: "O Mashad(۱) Mustafa! Don't leave the dish of broth

p: ۲۸

.It is the abbreviation of Mashhad -۱

in this corner. And you, O Husayn, tell them that yogurt is little, and don't forget to bring .Karbala'i the dish of butter

".After all the guests had had their lunch, Imam Quli rose, saying: "Our master, let's go

Addressing al-Hajj Ghulam Ridha, he added: "May Allah bless you, and shower mercy ".upon you. We seek your permission to go

Why are you in a hurry? Behbahan people wish the Sayyid stay among them, leading" .them in prayers, and guide them. O Karbala'i, you can stay too

".Thank you, O Hajj, I have to go. But in regard of al-Sayyid, he can stay if he wishes"

Thus all the guests have left al-Hajj Ghulam Ridha's house, except al-Sayyid Muhammad .Baqir who stayed in Behbahan

...We Seek Allah's Protection

!What a Time Is It

Khayrabad School seemed deserted as usual every Friday, with no one being there except Mashhadi Karam - the old school servant - who sat seeking warm under sun's ray (of Adhar.(١

Mirza Talib - a youth learning under al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir - entered (the school) .and saluted the old man

The old man raised his head, gazing the young knowledge- seeker before replying: "And ".peace be upon you

?"What happened"

They are still engaged in discussion, which has not ended since early morning till now. If" ".you like to listen to their discussion, you can enter ... Murad 'Ali is there too

Mirza Talib hesitated a bit before deciding to enter. Then he quietly opened the door, .greeting his friends with low voice, and sat down listening to the conversation

We have reached the conclusion"

p: ۲۹

.It is the ninth month of the Iranian calendar year -۱

that non-other than the Book of Allah and the narrations reported from the Infallible .Imams, can be a source for legislation. Even reason ('aql) cannot be a reliable source

Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir was nodding his head while listening, then he raised his head saying: "Even if the case be explicit needing no proof, with no opinion related about it by the Prophet or the Imams. Or when adopting it being a common practice entailing that it has got concurrence of the Infallible Imams, what will be the ruling concerning this ?"issue

".It will be rejected if not being supported by an authentic narration"

?"Do you agree with what the linguists reiterate"

".Certainly"

?"Is there any narration commanding you to do so"

".No"

?"Do you follow the recommendations and prescriptions of the doctor"

".Yes"

Which narration is there that obligates following the doctors' prescriptions? Certainly" nothing of this sort can be there. This fact is not confined to the doctor, but it includes the .architect, engineer, merchant and all other specialists

Nevertheless we see people adopt their opinions, why? Because reason determines this, .despite the absence of any tradition or Qur'anic verse in this respect

A murmur prevailed among the Akhbaris present there. One of them commented by ".saying: "This man is a sophist .... he mixes between fiqh and construction

".Another one shouted: "He intends to extinguish the truth light by his debate

A middle-aged man, wearing a black clock, stood up, saying: "Let's go, O friends! This man is giving reason an unparalleled status. I heard Mulla Husayn Quli say: When reason

p: ۳۰

dictates that what contradicts the dictation of shar' (Islamic law), the dictate of reason will be prior to the dictate of shar' – we seek Allah's refuge. What a time is it!"?

Thus the Akhbaris left the place, afterwhich Mashhadi Murad entered holding sweet drink cups.

Mirza Talib asked: "O master, what were they saying?"

"I'll explain the matter for you later on, O son."

The ۱st of Shawwal

As al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir was at the mosque, he

addressed Imam Quli thus:

"O Karbala'i! Tell people that today is the ۱st of Shawwal, and we are going to establish feast prayer (Salat al-'Id)."

"But, our master, you informed us yesterday, that people should have daybreak meal and fast."

"Trustworthy men have testified the sighting of crescent (hilal) of the 'Id."

Karbala'i Imam Quli has ordered a number of youth to let people know about this. After a while, some people came carrying some dates and milk from the house of al-Hajj Ghulam Ridha al-Behbahani, for distributing them among the villagers who came to perform salat al-'id.

When the ceremonies of salat ended, one of the Akhbaris asked al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir: "For which reason you have broken your fasting?"

"I became sure after ten trustworthy men gave witness." "Bring me a narration proving this, and your certainly is confined to a specific respect."

"It is really a regrettable matter, O brother! Though the narrations certify the confirmation of seeing the crescent with the testimony of two trustworthy men, you wonder about the tradition proving this!"

His speech was interrupted by al-Hajj Sharaf, addressing al- Sayyid: "I hope you

p: ۳۱

".accept my invitation to have lunch together. Do not forget to bring your family too

The Doctor Is Not a Lord

Peace be upon you, how are your Mirza Tahir? I was told that you are sick, so I came to" ".visit you

With a shivering voice, Mirza Tahir replied: "Praise belongs to Allah, our master. Days pass so fast, and no one of those accompanied you in your trip from Najaf, has survived except me. Years have elapsed like days ... thirty years have gone. Imam Quli died three years .ago, al-Hajj Qurban 'Ali died in the last year, and it seems as it is my turn this time

".O Mirza, what is that you utter? ... You will be well, God- willing"

O Sayyid, I got tired. I have been bedridden for ten days, I cannot even move my hands." ".I have become a burden for the family

?"What does the physician say"

The physician is not a lord, the only thing he has is the "Taranjabin". Please invoke Allah" ".(to take away His trust, I am fed up with life. (His words were mixed with sobbing

Allah is merciful O Mirza ... He is more merciful than the parents. Recovery is at His hand -" ".the Glorified

.Then al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir departed him, mumbling with supplication and prayers

After elapse of several days, Mashhadi Muhsin came to inform the Sayyid about the passing away of Mirza Tahir, whereat the Sayyid rushed to his house for consoling his .family

I Wish I Had Gone

O 'Abd al-Husayn, see who is knocking at the door," said Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, calling"

p: ۳۲

.his son

Abd al-Husayn rushed to open the door, then he said: "Father! It is a man asking about' ".you

The Sayyid stood up and went toward the door, saying: "Ma sha' Allah ... You and ".(Behbahan?! You may have missed the way, please (come in

?"Sayyid Muhsin entered saying: O Allah .... O Allah." "Well O Sayyid! How are you

".You may forget your friends so soon, but I never forget"

O Sayyid, I am engaged in some occupations. But tell me, O Sayyid Muhsin, why have you" ".... turned to be so old. Hoariness has invaded you and

Sayyid Muhsin interrupted him with a smile: "But you haven't remained as young as you used to be when being a knowledge-seeker learning wisdom (hikmah) under al- Sayyid .Muhammad

.Yes, this is the nature of life, all have to go on a travel, ending with death"

Yes, we are all on a travel. I have also thought with myself that when I will be asked" about what I have done, what shall be my answer? When saying I was seeking knowledge, I shall be asked: What have you done with your knowledge? There at I will stand perplexed, so I have made up my mind to return to my town hoping for rendering a .service that can be of benefit for me on the Reckoning Day

What an excellent opinion is it ... people are in need of men like you. When I was at" Isfahan, I heard too much about you, people speaking of you constantly. I was

p: ۳۳

told that some people at “Chahar Bagh(۱)” School were saying that Sayyid Muhammad .Baqir did a great job in guiding the Akhbaris to the right path

I seek Allah’s forgiveness ... Muhammad Baqir is not in a position proper to guide people,” Allah is the only One Who guides. He guides whoever He wishes, we are no more than .mere means

?Well, how could you manage to persuade them”

.They are truly good and simple people at the same time”

They are so fanatic for the Shari’ah (Islamic Law), the fact that caused them to slip, but when faced with a decisive argument they be convinced. They are of the opinion that it is not obligatory to imitate a mujtahid, and that imitation is confined only to the (Infallible) Imam, which is not possible; as deducing from reports can be done only by an expert .man

In the meantime, Muhammad ‘Ali, the elder son of al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, entered “.holding cups of sweet drink and sweets (saying): “Peace be upon you

.And upon you, Thanks to God, you have become elder”

A short period of silence prevailed, that was interrupted by Sayyid Muhammad Baqir’s ?saying: “What news you have about Najaf

Everything is all right...but if you inquire about Karbala’, I tell you it has turned to be a den” .for the Akhbaris, who believe in unlawfulness of learning usul al-fiqh

.How amazing! I heard about this, but not to that extent”

It is better, O Sayyid, that you send to Karbala’ some copies of your book al-’Ijtihad wa” .al-’akhbar

p: ۳۴

۱- Meaning the four gardens.

“.They may be of benefit there

The book may be useful, but what is more important is struggling and combating at the” “.battlefield. I wish I could go

Thereat the call for noon prayer was raised, and Muhammad, Baqir stood up, saying: “I’ll “.go to the mosque … you can stay and rest.” “Make yourself home, I will be back soon

“.I am going too, let’s go together”

.Then they both set out to the mosque

!The Wonderful Judgement

“.Praise belongs to Allah… Allah has showered upon you of His bounties”

“.You haven’t eaten well, O Sayyid! The food might be untasty”

“.On the contrary, it was so good food, may the cook’s hands be healthy”

.Muhammad ‘Ali whispered at his father’s ears, while collecting the dishes

During your going to the mosque, Khayr Allah’s wife came asking your attendance to” “.marry her daughter to ‘Abbas Quli Mirab

Have you noticed O Sayyid? People here badly need you; this ‘Abbas Quli was married to” “.his niece

“!!It is impossible”

When ignorance prevails among people, they do whatever they like. But I have given” “.orders to their urgent separation (divorce)”. “Did they respond?” “Yes, praise be Allah’s

Praise be Allah’s…and if they were of the opinion that imitating the mujtahid being” unnecessary, they would have stuck to their foolish practices, everyone playing his drum.” “Have you heard that one of the judges has ordered to bury a man returning from travel, after some people testified to the judge, during the man’s absence, that he was dead? So the judge ordered to bury him as soon as he

p: ۳۵

"!came back

?"!Have they buried him alive"

Yes … the judge has ordered to bury him, considering him dead according to the" testimonies of the witnesses, and Shar' (Islamic Law) obligates the burial of the dead; so "!his burying is obligatery! Look, what have reports (akhbar) done to them

For every field of knowledge there are its specialized men, and not whoever holds the" "!plow becomes a farmer

Even plowing and farming need one having expertise in these fields, being aware of their" .('principles and ramifications (furu

".I have to go back to Isfahan"

?"What? Have you grown tired of us so soon"

".I seek Allah's forgiveness"

".Spend your night here then… to travel in the morning is much better"

I Said Nothing

".What is the matter our master! Please stay with us"

Khwajah 'Aziz Kalantar(۱) was vainly insisting on al-Sayyid (to stay), but the latter never .paid attention to him, and set out returning home

Mashhadi Sha'ban Hamami said: The Sayyid may feel unwell, as he is not supposed to .(leave people without leading them in afternoon prayers (salat al-'asr

Mirza(۲) Yahya al-'Attar rushed toward Khwajah 'Aziz: "Let him go, he may be sick … why ?"do you insist on him so much

?"Khwajah 'Aziz, a bit disturbed, said" "What do you say

".Ghulam Ridha worriedly said: "You may have told him something that angered him

".(I said nothing (of that sort"

".No, I saw you whispering at his ear"

Nothing, I have just told him: Look what are the consequences of my orders? How have" ?they led to mobilizing worshippers behind you

Al-Hajj Ghulam Ridha exclaimed: "O Mulla

p: ۳۶

.Meaning a police officer -۱

The Iranians give the tille "Mirza" to whoever is born of a mother belonging to Banu -۲ .Hashim, not the father

."Murad, go forward to lead afternoon prayer…people are awaiting

Then he added, mumbling: "Khwajah 'Aziz has angered al-Sayyid by his words. Al- Sayyid ".is not like the others, who are pleased by multiplicity of people

Then the call for prayer was raised by Mashhadi Sha'ban. In the evening (asil), Khwajah 'Aziz Kalantar set out, accompanied by al-Hajj Ghulam Ridha and some of the village dignitaries, toward the house of al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, for calling him to establish .maghrib prayer at the mosque

Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir quietly said: "Thanks to Allah, at Behbahan there is someone competent to substitute me in leading people in prayer and giving verdicts. I think my ".responsiblity has come to its end in this region, and I have to travel

?"Khwajah 'Aziz sadly said: "O Sayyid, are you still angry with us

Al-Sayyid kindly replied: "Whatever happened has elapsed and it is finished with it. I determined to travel and returning to Najaf, the only thing I hope is you pray to Allah for ".me

Chapter ۴

The Locality Mosque

?"Why have we departed Najaf and come to Karbala', O father"

?"Don't you like this town"

".I never meant this, but when we were at Behbahan we decided to travel to Najaf"

My son, you know I am after knowledge, and I have never attained my wish there, so I" ".came to Karbala' hoping to find someone to learn under

You won't find what you seek, at this town, father, as herein someone forbidding" ".learning usul al-fiqh

So our mission will be more difficult, we have to fight such"

?“perverted thoughts.” “Is this possible

Yes, I have been attending classes of al-Shaykh Yusuf al- Bahrani for five days, and I” have noticed a desire for learning usul among his disciples. I am teaching them now this .lesson at the crypt as you see

“.Abd al-Husayn said: “There are guests awaiting at the door, father’

His brother Muhammad ‘Ali rushed to their welcome. Middle-aged men entered, taking :their seats in the muddy room, saying

.This locality people, our master, desire that you lead them in prayer”

“.But where is the mosque imam (leader).” “May Allah’s mercy be upon him”

“.You mean he is dead…so there should be no delay”

Shadows of Horror

Brothers! Today is the fifteenth of Sha’ban, the blessed birthday of the Owner of Time” (Wahib al-’Asr), may Allah hasten his reappearance. It is really nice to talk about this .great day

At the outset, we have to recognize that there is a Divine convenience behind his” occultation. So it is improper for anyone to inquire about the reason why the Imam is not .appearing, as he is alone knows the due time for appearance

It is narrated that he (will appear) wearing rough clothes, and eating simple food, and his .occultation being a grace from Allah

A murmur prevailed among the attendants, each commenting as he wishes. Then al-.Sayyid Muhammad Baqir descended the pulpit, feeling regretful for his hastiness

:Mirza Hasan al-’Attar inclined upon a man sitting beside him, whispering angrily

We have made a mistake in inviting this man…a mosque without an imam is more” preferable than an enemy to the

.Imam

Abd al-Ridha al-Baqqal mockingly said: “This man dislikes the appearance of the Imam,’ “.fearing the loss of his leadership

Mirza Habib Allah, who took part in calling al-Sayyid to be the mosque imam, regrettably commented: “They are consuming the bounties of Wahib al-Zaman, and unsheathing “!their swords at him! What a wondrous time

Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir realized the waves of anger that prevailed among those .present at the mosque, feeling sorry for his hastiness, returning home then

After a few minutes, his house door was knocked violently, in a way breaking the silence .that overshadowed the house

?“Who is at the door”

“.It is Muhammad Husayn Misgar, who spreads out your prayer rug every day”

Al-Sayyid Muhammad opened the door, being terrified at seeing Muhammad Husayn with his furious frightening complexion. He was taken by surprise with the man throwing the :rug at his face, shouting

“.Take your rug, O the apostate ... my prayer behind you is invalid outright”

That night al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir stayed up restlessly, without being able to sleep at all. He never felt so frightened before, expecting being assailed by some fanatics at any .time

:Suddenly the strong sound of knocking was heard. Al- Sayyid, feeling terrified, cried

?“Who is at the door at this late time of night”

:He went out to the house yard

?“Who is it”

“!It is me, Muhammad Husayn Misgar! Please, open the door, Sir”

?“What else you want from me? Haven’t you be sufficed with that you did for me”

“.I have erred, and I came to apologize”

.Al-Sayyid cautiously opened the door

The man fell

p: ٣٩

down on al-Sayyid's feet, intending to kiss them. Al-Sayyid said: "I seek Allah's ".forgiveness! What are you doing? Stand up O brother

Don't blame me Sir ... as soon as I slept that night, I saw in drean Wahib al-Zaman" ".reprimanding me for what I did (for you); so I rushed asking you to forgive me

".May Allah pardon all of us"

We Stay Then

".We are to be ready for travelling again, mother"

.Muhammad 'Ali mumbled, as all the family members gathered for having breakfast

The mother, seemed totally dejected, replied: "Have you grown tired of Karbala' so ?"soon

".How can one be wearied of the city of al-Husayn? But this is the nature of life, mother"

Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir was listening, then he turned his face to his wife addressing ".'her gently: "We are not going, we will never leave Karbala

Muhammad 'Ali opened his mouth surprisingly: "But, father, you have ordered me to be ".ready for travel." "Yes, that is right

?"What happened then"

O son! I saw in dream my master al-Husayn (peace be upon him) addressing me" admonishingly: "Why are you departing me? I am displeased with you on doing this." So I .have made up my mind to stay

A Call for Starting

?"Muhammad 'Ali exclaimed questioning: "Why have you hastened to go father

".I have a mission ... I have to visit al-Shaykh Yusuf"

But father, aren't you fearing being ventured by his disciples? The atmosphere is" ".alarming of danger: "No time is there for thinking ... in fact I am commanded to do so

".Let me accompany you, father"

... No need for this"

p: ۴۰

.al-Husayn won't let me alone, he shall verily help me overcome these Akhbaris

.I will confer with them with that which is the best

Thus a chapter of debate started between al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir and al-Shaykh .Yusuf al-Bahrani

Al–Hajj Karim

:Al-Hajj Karim, addressing the pilgrims' shoe-keeper at the holy shrine, said

?"Do you know that man?" "Who"

:Al-Hajj Karim pointed at a middle-aged man. That man said

Not much, but I heard Mulla 'Ali al-Wa'izi talking well of him, telling of his being among" the upright men. Seemingly he is the son-in-law of the late al-Sayyid Muhammad al-.Tabataba'i

".'He seems to be among the 'ulama"

?"How come you to know"

He is debating all the time with al-Shaykh Yusuf al-Bahrani at the shrine. They continue" their discussion after maghrib and 'isha' prayers, up to the end of night. After closing the shrine gates, they move to the portico, and when closing its doors, they move to the courtyard. On closing the courtyard doors, they betake themselves out of it, whereat we .leave them and go home

The next morning, as we come to open the courtyard doors, we find them engaged in debate. When the dawn call (for prayer) be raised, the Shaykh goes to perform the prayer, going home then; while this man - as you see - remains standing here after .prayer

Since the Day

Muhammad 'Ali picked up the last morsel of his food, saying (to his father): "For a long time, you come home so late, father, and sometimes you stay out till morning ... are you

?"still debating with al-Shaykh

".Yes"

But"

p: ۴۱

father, al-Shaykh - seemingly - never intends to submit to truth; otherwise, what is the ?“use of this

Yes, I think that the debate was sufficient, but seemingly he is aware of what are the” Akhbaris feeling of fanaticism, since he is Akhbari to the bone. But I think too that al-.Shaykh is convinced now with the arguments and proofs I cited for him

?“Why doesn’t he show this”

?“He is afraid of the ignorants.” “What to do then”

“.You will soon realize the fruits of this long debating with him”

?“At what time”

“.Today, at the holy shrine, at the end of al-Shaykh Yusuf’s class”

“.Let me come with you father.” “I never mind if you wish”

“.Me too father”

.Abd al-Husayn voiced his readiness’

.O son, you too can come

What Do You Want O Man? It was the first hour of afternoon (‘asr), when Sayyid :Muhammad Baqir entered the courtyard (sahn), with his two sons. Muhammad ‘Ali asked

?“What do you intend to do, father”

?“Nothing actually, we will wait in this place.” “What then”

We wait) till al-Shaykh Yusuf finishes his lesson, and all knowledge-seekers depart the)” “.place

“.O ‘Abd al-Husayn, go and have a look ... the class may be finished now”

:Abd al-Husayn set out to the holy shrine, and soon returned, saying’

“.The lesson is over, father and the disciples are leaving”

Thereat al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir rose and loudly shouted: "O people, I am Allah's trustee over you."

People turned their paces toward the voice with astonishment, and soon they gathered around him, looking up for information.

One of the knowledge-seekers exclaimed: "What

p: ۴۲

?"are you after, O man

Nothing…I just ask al-Shaykh Yusuf to vacate the lesson seat for me, and order his" ".disciples to learn under me

"!A shaykh, advanced in years, sadly said: "May Allah make your end well

.One of the knowledge-seekers whispered to his friend

Let's go, I supposed him to be a sane man, he is unsatisfied with the lesson chair, but" !asking to have the disciples even

A middle-aged man, on whose forehead there were traces of prostration, raising his head :up to the sky, murmured with the supplication

My God, shower Your mercy upon us and protect us against the mischiefs of our souls," enjoining unto evil. Look how loving the high rank and headship, and jealousy have ".changed people

Yusuf Gives His Regards

Al-Shaykh Yusuf al-Bahrani's house was swarming with the disciples, among whom .appeared Sayyid Mahdi al-Brujerdi and Mirza Muhammad Mahdi al-Shahristani

Sayyid Mahdi said to his teacher: "Have you heard what is uttered by al-Sayyid ?"Muhammad Baqir at the courtyard

?"Al-Shaykh Yusuf smiled: "What has he said

He said that he being Allah's trustee over us." "The man, said the truth, what was your" ?"reply

Some of us have uttered meaningless words, and Sayyid 'Ali questioned him: What do" ?you want

?"What was he after"

He said that he demanded al-Shaykh Yusuf's (teaching) rostrum, and to order his" ".(Shaykh's) students to learn under him

You, O Sayyid Mahdi, and Sayyid Muhammad, both are my most outstanding disciples ...” go away toward him and announce: From now on he will be the teacher. Then he turned his face toward the multitudes of

p: ۴۳

the knowledge-seekers exclaiming: “Dear students, he (Sayyid Baqir) will be your ”.teacher

One of the students nervously disapproved: “Do you retreat fighting so soon?!” We can ”.dismiss him from Karbala’, if you command us to do so

I am undertaking what I see to be my duty. He is a knowledgeable man and competent” for teaching. I am duty- bound, as I said, to leave my place for him, so you have to be .under his disposal and benefit from his knowledge

?What Do You Say Sir

Yes, as I told you, one should never retreat the battle-field, as by doing so he will give his” foe a good opportunity for defeating him, causing him to feel having strength and self- .confidence

Mirza Kamal al-Rashti, surprisingly, inquired: “O Sayyid Taqi, what happened? I haven’t ?attended the class, has any accident occurred

Accident?! You can say it is a disaster. This man who came from Behbahan to Karbala’,” and al-Shaykh Yusuf has been kind to him by granting him the teaching seat, is daring to forbid attending the classes of al-Shaykh Yusuf or praying behind him. I would like to .reciprocate him the twice of his act, and that we expel him from Karbala’ so violently

In the meantime, al-Shaykh Yusuf entered with water drops falling down from his face .due to taking ablution

They preceded him in salutation and receiving him, and Sayyid Taqi immediately said to :him

O Shaykh, you have previously said: Retreating the (battle) field is an improper act: Al-” :Shaykh interrupted him with a smile

I have heard whatever you uttered”

p: ۴۴

while taking ablution. Why do you talk so loudly that your neighbours can hear you? Truly, .al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir is a man of a lofty rank

That who refuses to be thankful for good (ma'ruf), forbidding then praying behind that" ?"!who did him good, how can be counted noble

He has his own proof for this, I have talked to al-Sayyid, never sensing his following the" ".desire, and his verdict is quite justifiable

:Mirza Kamal, who kept silent all that time, put forth this question

?"What are you saying, our master? Shall we learn under him"

:Sayyid Taqi angrily said

?"Or rather say: Is prayer behind him counted valid"

".On my part, I permit my disciples to attend his classes and pray behind him"

.(But, our teacher, he considers praying behind you to be unlawful (haram"

".He has exposed his legal judgement, and me too"

.Each one of us has undertaken his duty

The Congratulations

After finishing his lessons, al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, on his way home, was asked by ?"'Abd al-Husayn: "Should I extend congratulations, father?" "What for

".For this triumph"

?"!Was there any war, or triumphant"

What do you say, father? I myself have heard today Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi al-" Shahristani, the most notable disciple of al-Shaykh Yusuf, telling of your being an ".'allamah, or rather all the disciples believe you to be so too

There is no difference between fulfilling the duty and victory. Do you think all that which"

?"took place, was done by me

".Certainly, this is the product of those long nights of investigation"

You are quite mistaken, my son; there are hundreds of men"

p: ۴۵

resembling Muhammad Baqir in being unable to attain this position. All this was with Allah's help and al-Shaykh Yusuf's support, or rather Allah alone has showered this bounty upon us. "O father, you show much modesty, and only Allah has knowledge of the ".praiseworthy act you have done

My son, if congratulations should be given, the only one deserving them is al-Shaykh" Yusuf, who has overcome his desires, being unbeguiled by the temptation of owning a .high post and other worldly lusts

The Plague

As al-Hajj Karim, the attendant at al-Husayn's shrine, sighted a new funeral procession, he sadly murmured: "We are Allah's own and unto Him we return." Addressing his :companion, he added

".Look at the results of the epidemic ... this is the fifth hearse arriving here"

".Rather, it is the sixth one, O Hajj"

What difference it makes? It is the plague. About its symptoms, I heard Mirza" Muhammad al-Hakim say: It starts with a headache, followed by a fever, an intense shiver, and then hallucination. Finally a swelling protrudes at the thigh or armpit or neck as big as an orange. Fortunately this kind of plague differs with the black plague, ".otherwise the tragedy would have been greater

"!Whose bier is this? A large number of scholars are seen behind it"

".I think it to be of al-Shaykh Yusuf, I heard Mulla Ibrahim announce his death"

"!So let's perform prayer (salat al-mayyit) upon him"

They rushed toward the place. Al-Hajj Karim asked: "What are you waiting for? Aren't you ?going to pray upon him

Mulla Ibrahim replied: "He

p: ۴۶

".has willed that al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al- Behbahani perform prayer upon him

In the meantime, it was announcement about the arrival of al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, .who immediately began the prayer

Bright Visions

It was the fifteenth of Sha'ban, and the house of al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir was filled .with his disciples

:On this occasion al-Sayyid said

Increase your provision of knowledge as much as you can, today is the anniversary of" the blessed birthday of Wahib al- Zaman who is continuously watching our deeds. So do not postpone for tomorrow that which you can do today, don't be afraid of poverty, and ".strive toward doing good

:Al-Sayyid Mahdi Brujerdi inquired

?"Our master, how does Wahib al-Zaman watch our deeds"

:Al-Sayyid (Baqir) replied

Some days ago, I was honoured with visiting al-Najaf, meeting there some of its" magnates, at the head of whom was al-Shaykh Mahdi al-Futuni. He put before me a question worth mentioning for public interest. He said: If someone travels to Qum intending to stay there for ten days, is it permissible for him to move through the nearby ?gardens, which are commonly considered a part of it

:One of the knowledge-seekers replied

".Verily he cannot do so, since he has intended to reside at the town for ten days"

?"By coincidence, al-Shaykh al-Futuni holds the same opinion, what do you say then"

".There should be some meditation, and right might be on the side of al-Futuni"

As long as I am concerned, I told al-Shaykh Mahdi that this person has no option to" .depart the town for even one step

:Sayyid ‘Ali al-Tabataba’i questioned

Could”

p: ۴۷

?"you prove this (ruling) for al-Futuni

Proving! I continued debating these issues with him for long hours of night, with each one" sticking to his opinion till the problem was solved by Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-.Mazandarani

?"!How"

He came in the morning without any knowledge of the matter, saying: I saw - in dream -" the Owner of Time (Wahib al-Zaman) [A] addressing me: O Baqir! "Tell al-Futuni that the right opinion regarding the question is that of al-Baqir". Thus al-Futuni withdrew his .opinion

?"How wonderful! Is al-'Imam concerned with us to this extent"

:Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir touched upon his beard, and solemnly said

More wonderful than this is that the spirits of the upright men are also watching our" .deeds

Once I was busy writing commentaries on the book al- Madarik, refuting sometimes some of the author's opinions. As my work was about to conclude, on the same night I saw (in sleep) the author of al-Madarik, and I shamefully said to him: I have misbehaved in writing some refutations, my master, if you like to delete them, I certainly shall do. He .replied: I am pleased with you, may Allah be pleased with you

Based on this, when the author of al-Madarik being pleased, undoubtedly the Imams are .pleased too

.Meanwhile, Muhammad 'Ali whispered: The time of adhan (call for prayer) is due

Al-Sayyid rose for taking ablution, betaking himself then to the shrine, accompanied by .his disciples

Presage of Tomorrow

The disciples performed the prayer and returned home, with no one left except Muhammad 'Ali, 'Abd al-Husayn and Sayyid 'Ali

p: ۴۸

al-Tabataba'i (who has recently got married to 'Abd al- Husayn's sister), who have :returned with al-Sayyid. Sayyid 'Ali asked

A long time elapsed, but Mirza Abu al-Qasim is never attending the classes; has he" '?"departed Karbala

Yes, as told by Sayyid Afdhal: He came from Iran to Karbala' a short time ago, leaving it" then toward Jabliq. From Jabliq he went to Qal'ah Babu, then to Shiraz, and after it to

!Isfahan, at last he settled down at Qum. So you can call him now by the name al-Qummi

:Abd al-Husayn, looking at him with admiration, said'

The world used to turn its back at you, then it has come unto you with all its good, but you" are still, father, wearing your ragged clothes, aren't you intending to replace them with ?new ones

:The father has knitted his brows, pretending heedlessness, saying

".Your mother asked me to purchase some yogurt"

:Abd al-Husayn, resuming the topic from another corner, said'

O father, your body cannot endure the continuous prayer and unending fasting. Isn't it" the time yet for being relieved of hire prayer? What is the use of all this, while you ?distribute all its fees among your disciples? Isn't it the time to be careful of yourself

The Sayyid bent down, picking up a stone from the middle of the road, pelting it aside in :order that no one might stumble down by it, said

In fact, I am only concerned with myself, thinking that fasting in deputation for the dead," and distributing its fee then among the wretched who

p: ۴۹

are unable to afford for purchasing their sustenance to satisfy their hunger, are things not far from taking care of the self. All my concern is about my future, which lies in the hereafter; whatsoever you spend, you will find near Allah. It seems we have reached al-Sayyid Haydar's stores…go and buy us some yogurt, as we have guests today: your sister .and her husband

Chapter ۵

Mirza Shams al-Din

Al-Sayyid Mahdi al-Tabataba'i al-Brujerdi, Mirza Muhammad al-Majlisi al-Shahristani, and al-Sayyid 'Ali al-Tabataba'i, with other disciples were sitting in the house of al-'Ustadh awaiting his arrival, whereat Sayyid Mahdi said: "Do you know what for al-?'Ustadh has asked us to come here

As Muhammad Mahdi intended to comment on the question, al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir arrived, so all the disciples stood up to welcome him. He said: "Salam 'Alaykan (peace be ".(upon you

".And peace and Allah's mercy be upon you"

My dear sons, I summoned you to tell you that I have become an aged old man, unable" to give lectures, or undertaking much reading, so I intend to commit to you some affairs ".for relieving me of some of my burdens

Does that mean you are going to suspend your lessons?" "Nearly … I will, everyday, read" ?"one line from Sharh al-Lum'ah for bless-seeking only." "Only Sharh al-Lum'ah

Yes, and O Sayyid Mahdi, you have to go to Najaf for teaching there, while Mirza" Muhammad Mahdi stays here, with Sayyid 'Ali and some other brothers for administering .the affairs here

Sayyid Mahdi asked: "Where will the lessons of Sharh al-Lum'ah

p: ۵۰

?"be held

.In this house at the early morning. Now go and prepare yourselves for teaching"

After the disciples had left the house, Muhammad 'Ali asked his father: "So you have ?"stopped everything, aren't you

No, my son, I am of the opinion that the youth should undertake teaching, so that I can" devote all my time for conducting the Eawzah (theological school). Further, their academic level is encouraging, as some days ago I went through a book authored by al-.Mirza al-Qummi named: Qawanin al-'usul, that deserved my admiration

Also, never forget Sayyid Mahdi(١), who has become scholar ('alim), and Sayyid 'Ali, your brother-in-law, who has turned to be a great faqih (jurisprudent). You also are in need of a teacher, while I - as you see - have almost reached my end, and it is time to sit and review all my writings, as some of them need revision and modification, lest I should .cause others to deviate

".O father, you are still in the best condition, and it is early for such an utterance"

Don't be courteous, for every human being there is a destined hour (ajal), and I became" ".an old man and a father of a ۵٠-year old son. Bring me the books please

".They are all inside this box, numbering more than seventy books and treatises"

I have revised some of them, you can only read me their titles to see whether they need" ".revision or not

Muhammad 'Ali opened the box and started taking out the books. "This box needs to be repaired

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He was later known with the name Bahr al-'Ilm, and considered one of his age - ١ outstanding 'ulama'. He spent two years in the two holy shrines teaching al-Fiqh 'ala al-madhahib al-'arba'ah, giving solutions for their hard judicial questions, with which he embarrassed the Hijaz 'ulama', to the extent that some of them said: "If the Shi'ah be

right in their claim about the reappearance of al-Mahdi Wahib al-Zaman, he is verily non-
“.other than this man

“.too, father

:Then the son began to read the books’ titles

Sharh Mafatih al-Fiqh, by al-Faydh al-Kashani, from “kitab al-taharah” up to “al-khums”,” in eight volumes; Eashiyah ‘ala Mafatih al-fiqh; and Eashiyah ‘ala Dibajah of the same .book

“.I have finished revising them”

“.Al-Fawa’id al-Ea’iriyyah fi fusul al-fiqh”

“.I have reviewed most of it”

.(Eashiyah ‘ala al-Madarik, from “kitab al-taharah” up to the end of “al-salat” (prayer”

Put Sharh al-’Irshad aside, as it should be revised.” “There is someone knocking at the” “.door, father.” “You keep on your work, I’ll open the door

.Al-Sayyid stood up, holding his pen, and went toward the door

!Who? Mirza Shams al-Din? Welcome”

“.Peace be upon the teacher ... there is a delegation coming from the King of Iran”

?“What do they want”

One of the delegation members respectfully addressed him: “Peace be upon you (al-:salam ‘alaykum). Then, asking another one to approach al-Sayyid, he added

This is a royal gift sent to you from the King Muhammad Khan al-Qajar, with his wishes.” Look, Sir, it is a unique Qur’an, decorated by precious stones adding to its splendidness .and nicety, with the lines being inscribed with liquid gold

My sons, why do you place the Holy Books inside boxes away from people. You had” .better sell these stones and distribute their earnings among the poor and needy

?“What to do now, my master”

The holder of the Qur'an may keep it to read Allah's words … you may go under Allah's"
".protection

?"After closing the door, he returned to his place. "Who were they, father

,A delegation from the King of Iran"

p: ۵۲

?"with a present." "What was the present

".A Qur'an (mushaf), set with precious stones and gold"

What a misguidance is it! They claimed that they (stones) elevate one's status and .position, adding to his worth

?"Where is it"

?"With the delegation." "Haven't you accepted it"

Yes, I have a Qur'an from which I recite Allah's holy verses, I told them to keep it with its" .holder to read from it. Let's go back to work

;Eashiyah 'ala al-Wafi, Eashiyah 'ala al-Kafi; al-Tahdhib"

.Sharh al-Qawa'id and al-Masalik

".Put it aside, I mean Eashiyat al-Masalik"

Al-'Ijtihad wa al-'akhbar, Rasa'il fi wujub al-taqlid fi zaman al-ghaybah (Treatises on" obligation of imitation during Occultation), and Risalah fi istihalat ru'yat Allah (impossibility of sighting Allah). Isn't this the text of debate between you and a scholar from Ahl al-?Sunnah, father

".Yes, it is"

.Risalah fi al-jabr wa al-'ikhtiyar, and Risalah fi al-'istishab, and one on al-bara'ah"

".Keep them aside, they should be reviewed." "The call for prayer is raised"

".Be ready for prayer then, people are awaiting"

Come Back Soon Tonight

The last days of Sharivar(١) have passed, as al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir was engaged in reading, while his wife being busy in mending an old dress, saying: "Aren't you going to ?"Behbahan

Behbahan in these days … have you missed your relation?” “Terrible dreams are” “.frightening me

?“Don’t be afraid, haven’t we received good tidings some days ago”

:While looking at one side, he added

“.Who is that woman?” “Who? No woman is there.” “That one wearing a rosy dress”

What do you mean? This is our daughter-in-law, the wife of ‘Abd al-Husayn … you” engage yourself in

p: ۵۳

.It is the sixth month of the Iranian calendar year -۱

reading to the extent that you forget your daughter-in-law too. I will prepare supper food .... by the way, come back soon tonight, we have guests

?"Who are they"

".Your daughter with her husband"

They are not guests ... tell 'Abd al-Husayn to come . After some seconds, 'Abd al-Husayn" :entered and was surprised when seeing his father look gloomy, saying

?What happened father? Have I done a mischief"

".I don't like to see your wife with such clothes"

What for? Our purchases are like those of other people, which are not unlawful (haram)." Allah - the Glorified - said in His holy Book: "Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment of ?"Allah which He hath brought forth for His bondmen, and the good things of His providing

Yes, I too have heard this verse. But look at the way your neighbours are living ... our" clothes and food should be like theirs, so that life hardships can be easily endured by .them

".You said the truth"

".Now go back to your work"

".By the way, father, I saw Mirza Yahya on my way"

He intends to travel to Tabriz, wondering about an opportune time to see you. I told him .he can come two hours before sunset

:In the meantime, the door was knocked, 'Abd al-Husayn said

".I think it is him"

The Heavens Garment

A cold wind blew, foretelling of a biting winter. Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir with his sons were going toward the haram (shrine), whereat Muhammad 'Ali, feeling the chilly

:cold,murmured

We have never experienced such a cold throughout the ۲۷ years we have been residing"

p: ۵۴

.‘at Karbala

They are thirty-two years; you are right, we have never suffered such cold, though I am” “.not feeling cold

?“Why”

“.Your mother has woven me a warm overcoat, for which I am so grateful”

My master! My master! A pitiful voice came from a bare- footed bony-faced man,” :wearing worn-out clothes, saying

“.O master, it is too cold, and I have nothing to protect my head against the bites of cold”

?“Al-Sayyid asked him: “Have you got a knife

“.Yes, Sir. The man said this and inserted his hand into his pocket”

.O Muhammad ‘Ali, help me cut the coat sleeve … We have no other alternative”

?Do you cut the sleeve of this new overcoat, father? Isn’t there any other solution”

Cut it, my son … you should be pleased with such a deal: the overcoat sleeve against” .thousands of Divine graces and Paradise

Muhammad ‘Ali has cut the sleeve and handed it to the beggar, while Sayyid Muhammd :Baqir was gently addressing him

“.It is too warm, and will safeguard your head against the cold”

:When his wife saw the overcoat deformed, she fell sorry, saying

?“Where is its sleeve”

“.I have donated it to a needy man”

?“Do you know how much I toiled in weaving it”

It is not so considerable against its reward, one day we shall die whereat the overcoat be” “.worn out, but that sleeve will be turned into one of heavens dresses

Never Do It Again

In the morning of a Spring day, Sayyid Zayn al-'Abidin was going through the alleys on his way to attend the class of al-Sayyid. He said

p: ۵۵

to himself: I will attend the lesson first, then I'll go to the bathouse for taking a ritual bathing, afterwhich I'll perform morning prayer as qadha' (out of time). What had I to do ?as it was Spring and sleeping being so pleasant

.He opened the door, entered and saluted

.Mirza Hasan al-Tabini and Mulla 'Ali al-Tabrizi were waiting for al-'Ustadh

:Mulla 'Ali with Azari(١) dialect, said

You have arrived at due time, al-Sayyid is busy conferring with Sayyid Mahdi al-Brujerdi," ".otherwise you might have reached late as usual

After some seconds, al-Sayyid entered smiling, betaking himself to his place, moving his sight over his disciples. Suddenly his smile disappeared, in place of which frowning :appeared ... keeping down his face for a while, then he raised it saying

".Today is off, go home"

:Mulla 'Ali al-Tabrizi wondered

?"Are you all right, our master"

Yes, but no lesson will be given today, go home ... but you have to stay here, O Zayn al-" ".'Abidin

.(The disciples have all left the room. (Except Zayn al-'Abidin

:Al-Sayyid sadly murmured

O Sayyid! Lift the (straw) mat edge, take the money under it, go soon to the bathouse," and have a ritual cleansing. Never do it again, and never attend any meeting when being .(ritually impure (junub

".It was late, Sir, and I was interested in attending the lesson"

".Never forget what I told you"

Thereat Sayyid Zayn al-'Abidin rose, feeling too ashamed, walking, with stumbling steps,

.toward the door

Study, My Son

The sun of Mordad(٢) was too scorching, and al-Sayyid was wearing his white dress, resting in bed. He got up

p: ۵۶

.According to Azerbaijan country -١

.It is the fifth month of the Iranian calendar year -٢

.and rose, walking toward the door after hearing a consecutive knocking at the door

".Al-Salam 'Alaykum"

Wa 'Alaykum al-salam, what is the matter, O Mulla Muhammad Ridha? What caused you" ?to come in such heat

Our master! Look there beside that tree. That man is an Isfahani merchant, who has" ".brought with him a piece of cloth, intending to gift to you

".I thought that your coming was for asking about a scientific issue"

.As al-Sayyid uttered this, he intended to close the door

?"I beg you Sir, to accept it." "What for"

".Since he promised me to offer me a similar gift on your accepting it. Pleace accept it Sir"

:Al-Sayyid smiled, saying

You seem badly needing it, I'll accept it on condition that you never be a medium for" (exchanging) gifts, and never forget your lessons, as learning is more important than all .these things

The Dream That Comes True

The Autumn sun was gradually cutting its way toward the horizon, and al-Sayyid's sons were busy making the room ready for the reception of the disciples. The students were .coming in ones and twos for spending the thirteenth of Rajab with their great master

The Ustadh, entered with a curved back, and a halo of light on his face. All those present .there rose up as a sign of veneration

Some moments elapsed, during which he was sitting, Mirza Mahmud, the eulogist, rose :chanting with his sweet voice

,Peace be upon al-Mustafa Ahmad

,Guardian of intercession in the Hereafter

,Peace (salam) be upon al-Murtadha al-Haydari

.And his sons, the bright stars

I have five with whom

p: ۵۷

,I extinguish, The Hellfire's smashing heat

Al-Mustafa and al-Murtadha

.And their two sons and Fatimah

Thereat salawat (blessings upon Muhammad and his Household) were raised, filling all the corners of the muddy room with fragrance and spirituality, with the glasses of sweet .drink (sharbat) being distributed among the attendants

:Al-Shaykh Ja'far has approached al-'Ustadh, asking

I have read the book Sharh al-Wafiyah of al-Sayyid Wadr al-Din al-Hamadani, finding in" it two different trends: in the first one he follows the course of al-mujtahidun, while in the .second one he adopts the trend of the Akhbaris

:Al-'Ustadh replied

I used to attend his lessons, closing before him the door of the Akhbaris in the first" ".section, but I haven't attended his lessons in the second section

:Mirza Muhammad Mahdi al-Shahristani inquired

?"He is known to be Akhbari, how could you influence him"

:Al-Sayyid smiled as usual, saying

?"Who told you that I have influenced him"

".It is obvious, your acts are explicitly indicating your position"

The fact is not as you say. I too, at the outset of my learning, was influenced with the" Akhbaris' thoughts, but with the passage of time I recognized their wrong way; as the .proofs of ijtihad, are irrefutable, besides being not easily confronted

Sayyid Mahdi inquired: You have held protracted arguments with al-Shaykh Yusuf al-?Bahrani; how could you recover him to the straight path

I haven't done so but I found him disinterested with the Akhbari school, criticizing them"

saying: They never bother themselves to think, or rather they never act according to their .(belief. They blindly imitate (their leaders

One

p: ۵۸

:of the disciples, stood in awe of him, exclaimed

?"Our master, how have you attained this lofty rank"

Al-Sayyid kept his head down modestly, saying: I am nothing, and rather I can never consider myself in the position you have. The same question reached me from another one, and

I answered him: If for every question there should be an answer, I have never desisted for even one moment from extolling knowledge and 'ulama', making knowledge-seeking .at the top priority over all other matters in my life

:A disciple, sitting beside Mirza Muhammad, mumbled

?"!If he truly extols the 'ulama', so why did he behave with al- Shaykh Yusuf in that way"

:Mirza Muhammad, with a low voice, whispered

It is said that whatever occurred was with the concurrence of both sides. Let me ask him:" ".Our master, Mirza Muhammad al-Muttalibi has a question

".No, Sir"

:Al-Sayyid then resumed his utterance

Watch yourselves in every act or saying, for attaining Allah's pleasure. Never feel tired or" be bored of knowledge- seeking, may Allah support you. I remember that one night at Isfahan, I saw in dream the Messenger of Allah surrounded by men who were annoying .and harming him

I rushed toward him to keep them away from him, saluting him afterwards, whereat he reciprocated my greeting, wiping my head, handing me a half-cubit roll. I took it and set out toward Karbala', passing through the courtyard and portico reaching the tomb. The wonderful point here that on being honoured with visiting Karbala', I saw the courtyard and portico being

exactly in the same image I saw in dream. More wonderful is that when I have compiled Sharh al-Mafatih, its cover was similar to the roll handed to me by the Messenger of Allah .in the dream

I am almost finished, but you should be careful and strive for attaining the blessingness of .(the Infallible (Ma'sumun

Chapter ۶

The Hard Days

The days of Shawwal were passing away, and cold winds were blowing through Karbala' alleys foretelling of hard days to come. Al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir, leaving behind eighty-nine winters, has been laid up at the bed of disease, sorrounded by Sayyid 'Ali al-Tabataba'i, his elder son Muhammad 'Ali, and Sayyid Mahdi al- Tabataba'i al-Brujerdi, his most eminent disciple, and his envoy to the holy City of Najaf, with others. Clouds of grief .and concern were overshadowing all those present there

?"Have you called in the physician"

Some of the doctors can identify the useful medicine and some may be mistaken. On last" ".Saturday the physician came and prescribed a medicine that was of no effect

?"Shall we stand pinioned up in this way"

Abd al-Husayn went to call upon one of the physicians, and he may be on his way back'" ".now

In the meantime, al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir opened his eyes and uttered vague words, .whereat Muhammad 'Ali rushed for giving ear to what he would say

:The tired lips moved, bringing out feeble tired words

".Turn my bed to the qiblah direction"

Muhammad 'Ali, dispirited, came toward Sayyid Mahdi and Sayyid 'Ali, informing them of .the approaching of the destined fate

Silence

p: ۶۰

prevailed all over the muddy room, to the extent that the lying patient's moaning could be .clearly heard

Sayyid Mahdi asked: Hasn't the doctor arrived yet? Muhammad 'Ali opened the Qur'an, .embarking on reciting some holy verses, with low voice

At that moment his daughter entered carrying a tray of herb, as prescribed by the physician. Al-Sayyid opened his eyes, while Allah's verses were spreading all over the house, whereat Muhammad 'Ali seemed trying his best to keep off the overshadowing .spectre of death

On the Wings of Verses

Hurry up please, the medicine was of no effect, and my father's condition is" ".deteriorating

.These words were desperately exclaimed by 'Abd al-Husayn

:The doctor scrubbed his white hair, saying

".Has he had the combination?" "Yes"

?"You may have left mixing it to the women"

".On the contrary, I myself have mixed it. Come with me"

As the physician and 'Abd al-Husayn intended to enter the alley, they heard a loud wailing raised from al-Sayyid's house, mixed with Allah's verses. The grieved son rushed to throw himself upon the laid body, while the Qur'anic verses were loudly recited holding with .(them the pure spirit up toward the Malakut (Sovereign Power

p: ۶۱

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities in .religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes .of people interested in reading, with various formats in the cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

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Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems, web- kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

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Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

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